

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 10-14 and 22-26 are pending in the application, with 10-14 and 22-26 being the independent claims. Claims 3-9, 15-21, 27, and 28 are sought to be cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Claims 10-14 and 22-26 are sought to be amended. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 3-5, 7-9, 15-17, 19-21, 27 and 28 have been cancelled by the amendment above without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein, thereby rendering their rejection moot. Applicants intend to file a continuation application containing claims directed to the cancelled subject matter.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 6 and 18 have been canceled by the amendment above without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein, thereby rendering their rejection moot. Applicants intend to file a continuation application containing claims directed to the cancelled subject matter.

Objection to Claims

The Examiner has objected to claims 10-14 and 22-26 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but has stated that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants accept the invitation to amend claims 10-14 and 22-26 in the aforementioned manner in order to place the claims in condition for allowance, and Applicants have amended the claims accordingly. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection is therefore respectfully requested.

It is noted that Applicants have amended claims 10-14 and 22-26 solely to expedite the allowance thereof. Applicants do not acquiesce to the Examiner's prior art rejections and will file a continuation application directed to the subject matter of cancelled claims 3-9, 15-21, 27, and 28.

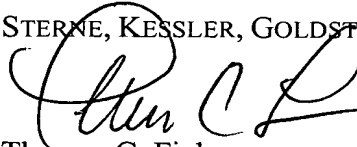
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.



Thomas C. Fiala
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 43,610

Date: 8/21/06

1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934
(202) 371-2600

516851_1.DOC